

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated May 9, 2003. Claims 1-94 remain in this application, of which Claims 1, 10, 20, 41, 45, 50, 52-55, 57-60, 62-65, 71, 73-76 and 78-94 have been amended to define Applicant's invention more clearly. Claims 1, 10, 20, 41, 50, 60, 93 and 94 are the independent claims. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

A Letter Submitting Corrected Drawing has been submitted herewith, along with a new formal drawing of Fig. 8A that contains the changes approved by the Examiner.

Claims 1-4, 6, 10, 16, 17, 20-24, 26, 30, 31, 37, 38, 41-44, 46, 50, 56, 57, 60-64, 66, 70, 71, 77, 78, 93 and 94 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,466,968 (*Shirai*). Claims 5, 11, 25, 32, 45, 51, 65 and 72 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Shirai* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,433,800 (*Holtz*), Claims 7-9, 18, 19, 27-29, 39, 40, 47-49, 58, 59, 67-69 and 79-92, as being unpatentable over *Shirai* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,327,610 (*Uchida*), and Claims 12-15, 33-36, 52-55 and 73-76, as being unpatentable over *Shirai* in view of *Uchida* and *Holtz*.¹

The present invention relates to an electronic mail system in which it is desired to avoid problems and inconvenience conventionally associated with the sending of e-mail having attachments of both a document and information distinct from but associated with the document.

¹ Although the body of the Office Action does not address Claim 32, Applicant believes the Examiner intended to reject it for the same reasons as for Claims 11, 51, and 72.

Independent Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus with a function of transmitting electronic mail that comprises designating means, for designating a desired object to be attached to electronic mail, and acquisition means, for acquiring access information that includes information about access to the object designated by the designating means. A generating means is provided, for generating electronic mail information, which includes the access information.

One of the notable features of Claim 1 is the generation of electronic mail information, which includes the access information indicating any limitation of access to an object to be accessed by a mail receiver (such as, for example, an attachment). The access information may, for example, include "access privilege", "validity date", and the like. (See page 12, line 12, to page 13, line 16, Fig. 5; it is to be understood, of course, that the scope of the claims is not limited by the details of this or any other portion of the detailed description.) By virtue of this feature, access limitation control can be easily realized without increasing the load upon the electronic mail system. (See page 2, line 19, to page 3, line 15.)

Shirai relates to a system that attaches additional information to an electronic mail, which indicates access information of an object (see column 12, lines 36-40). However, the *Shirai* system attaches location information about an object to be accessed, and does not teach or suggest attaching *access* information, which indicates any limitations on accessing the object. Accordingly, Claim 1 is believed to be allowable over *Shirai*.

Moreover, *Uchida* relates to sending an electronic mail with an access code. According to the *Uchida* approach, when a recipient wants to acquire the electronic mail, it is

necessary to access a mail server using the access code. Applicant submits that even if *Uchida* is deemed to teach transmitting an access code (access key), nothing has been found or pointed out in *Uchida* that would teach or suggest transmitting limitation information for accessing an object that is indicated to be accessed by the electronic mail. *Holtz* merely teaches displaying a list of electronic mails and attached objects in an at-a-glance form. Even if these patents were combined with *Shirai* (and assuming that such combination would be proper), the result would not meet the terms of Claim 1.

Claim 10 defines a receiver for receiving electronic mail including access information (limitation of access) as recited in Claim 1. Claim 20 defines a system including the apparatuses of Claims 1 and 10. Applicant therefore believes that Claims 10 and 20 also are patentable for the above reasons.

Claims 41, 50, and 60 are method claims corresponding to Claims 1, 10, and 20, and Claims 93 and 94 are memory claims corresponding to Claims 1 and 10. Accordingly, these independent claims are also patentable for the above reasons.

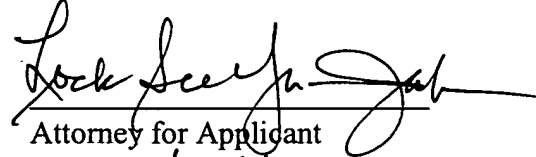
The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

CONCLUSION

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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